

Crossroads

The Magazine





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Photo Courtesy of David Weaver

Some will spend a great portion of their time searching for meaning in life. Bold as it may be, I believe the issue of *Crossroads: The Magazine* you hold in your hand, might have uncovered this sought after truth. As you are reading through the feature articles in this Fall 2004 issue, a general theme might become apparent in each story.

In "Building a Bridge," Paul Covey states, "It's all about relationships."

I couldn't have said it better myself. We spend our entire lives encountering different individuals every day. Some of those people we will learn to love, some we will learn to forgive and others will pass briefly through our lives and eventually be forgotten.

Covey was referring to the importance of forming relationships with the younger generation. Adult mentors at The Bridge strive to form quality relationships with Joplin area teenagers.

In "Getting Through Grief" a former MSSU student tells his experience of losing his fiancée in a fatal car accident only a few months before their wedding. He emphasizes the importance of the relationship he had with his fiancée and how she impacted his life.

Puggy Swadley shares a story of several relationships that greatly impacted her life in "Painting Keeps the Ghosts Away." These relationships live on through the memories she holds.

"Rings and Things" presents students with an insight on the proposal and engagement aspect of romantic relationships.

Sometimes in life it's difficult to live up to the expectations others have of us. In "Out of Control" two people learned the value of trust and making the right choices in life.

Whether it's your soul mate, your parent or the Wal-Mart greeter, our lives will forever revolve around the quality of the relationships we make during our lifetime.

*"People are lonely because they build walls instead of bridges."
Joseph Newton*

Kristen Smith

Kristen Smith
Editor



Golfing The Mid-West Green

Story By: Chad Hunter

The flag snapped in the wind as the ball made its way toward the green. The ball hit the fringe and rolled onto the green, two feet from the pin, as the player watched.

His partner looked over at him and informed him of where his club would end up if he hit another shot like that.

Welcome to the wonderful world of golf. A sport in which camaraderie, competition and the occasional string of curse words go hand in hand.

The Joplin area has several courses to choose from, both public and private.

"We have a multitude of golf courses to choose from in this area," said Carter Leffen, senior finance major. "Loma Linda South is good. It has a little more scenery. It's challenging."


Loma Linda is a small community that includes two 18-hole courses: The north course, which is a membership-only course, and the south course, which is open to the public.

The south course includes a driving range and putting green, as well as the par-71 course.


"The green fees are \$10 on weekdays and \$12 on weekends not including a cart, which is another \$10 per person for 18 holes," said Jacob Hosp, south golf pro. "We also have annual golf passes for \$399 a year, which cover your green fees for one year and allow you to play six times on the north course."

The course also offers a \$30 discount card, which gives the holder a 20 percent discount off green fees and carts.

Another area course, which went under major renovation in 2003, is the Carthage



"I couldn't stand getting beat by an 80-year-old man."



Golf Course, the municipal course of the city of Carthage.

"We did just under \$3 million worth of renovation on the course. It looks great," said Josiah Bayless, course attendant. "We have a driving range, practice area and putting green. Our pro shop has a good selection with many of the name brands and demo clubs that you can take out on the course."

The green fees for the course are \$15 on weekdays and \$17 on weekends. The cart fee for 18 holes is \$10.

The course also offers many different membership plans.

Like many courses, Bayless recommends getting a tee time no matter when you are planning on playing.

Two public courses in Joplin are Range Line Golf Course and Schifferdecker Golf Course.

Range Line is a nine-hole, par-30 course.

"It's called an executive course. We have three par-four holes and six par-three holes," said Elaine Sedgewick, daytime manager.

The green fees are \$7 for the first nine and depending on whether it is a weekday or weekend, \$2 and \$4 for the second nine. Cart fees are also \$7 for a full cart. For those who can't get enough golf during daylight hours, Range Line has a fix.

"The whole course is lighted at night for late golf," Sedgewick said.

Range Line also offers a driving range, miniature golf course, batting cages, putting green and pro shop.

Schifferdecker Golf Course is an 18-hole, par-71 course owned by the City of Joplin. The course is home to one of the

oldest annual tournaments west of the Mississippi, the Ozark Amateur. The green fees for the course vary between \$8.95 on weekdays and \$10.05 on weekends.

"A lot of people are surprised at how reasonably priced we are," said Rita Moore, assistant manager for the course.

The cart fees vary depending on how many holes are played and whether one or two people are riding.

The course has two putting greens in addition to the 18 holes.

No matter when golfers decide to play at Schifferdecker, there is a good chance they will run into a rather odd couple. A 24-year-old college student and an 84-year-old retired truck driver playing together and neither of them would have it any other way.

David Bastian, general business major, and Dodson Brock, retired truck driver, have been playing golf together for the past five years.

They met one day when Bastian was driving into the parking lot at Schifferdecker Golf Course.

"I was a marshal out on the course, and I saw this young kid come flying up into the parking lot," Brock said.

"As soon as he got out of the car, I walked right up to him and told him if I ever saw that again he was in for it. He just looked at me and said 'yes sir.'"

From then on, when they saw each other they would joke around or play pranks on each other.

"Dodson hates to have stuff on his hands, and he always used to check the pay phone for any change that might have fallen into the coin return," Bastian said. "So, one day

I took some lotion and filled the return cup with it. Dodson came in and stuck his hand in there and about fainted. He got me back for it though when he filled all the door handles on my truck full of grease."

The two began playing golf together and quickly found they shared a love of the game as well.

"One day he asked if I wanted to go play a round, and I told him sure," Bastian said. "We went out and he beat me."

"I couldn't stand getting beat by an 80-year-old man, so I told him we were going to have to play again. We just started playing a round once or twice a week."

During these games, the two usually take bets from one another in the form of Pepsi.

They keep track on a calendar in the clubhouse, which usually shows Bastian on the losing end.

At the end of the month, the loser pays off the winner.


"One month he paid me \$44 worth of Pepsis," Brock said.

"I'd rather win a nickel from David than \$20 from anybody else. He gets so mad when he loses to me."

Over the years, both have gotten to know each other well and are frequent visitors to each other's homes.

"He usually calls me four to five times a day," Bastian said. "We keep in touch and always know what the other one's doing."

Brock usually receives an invitation to watch Pay-Per-View boxing with Bastian and his friends, and although there is an age difference between the two, Bastian doesn't think anyone cares about that.

"All my friends love him," Bastian said. "They think it's great." 





Jazz in Joplin

Story by Philip Martin
Photos by Andy Tevis

Locals enjoy blend of cool jazz with hot coffee

The stage lights go up slowly as the band takes the stage. After a short time of discussing the order of the charts the members take their positions and wait.

The band has no microphones, it doesn't need them. Half of the audience claps for the band's arrival. The other half don't seem to notice the band has arrived, they are too engrossed in what they are doing. Some are talking to their friends, others are reading, a few are playing games and a select few are studying for a test.

This doesn't seem to bother the band at all. The bandleader holds his saxophone in his hand while looking at the audience. He doesn't say a thing to the crowd. He smiles

wryly, turns toward the band and begins counting the beats. He snaps his fingers and says aloud: "1...2...1...2...3...4..." At the end of the count the band hits the opening chord and begin their weekly set.

Most of the audience still hasn't noticed the band playing. They continue on with what they are doing.

This is just another Thursday evening at the Dioko Coffee Company. Brian Nitz, manager of Dioko, said the coffeehouse promotes live jazz because it blends with the atmosphere.

"Jazz and blues have always blended well with the coffeehouse style," Nitz said. "Because it is a type of music that is soft

enough for people to still hold conversation, but it is also a style of music that promotes a relaxing atmosphere."

The blending of jazz and blues along with the different blends of coffee is what has prompted other coffeehouses to hold jazz nights. Dioko is following the precedent set years ago. Nitz said the residents of Joplin enjoy the night.

"There's a population of people in Joplin that really enjoy jazz and there's not a whole lot of places to go and sit and listen. So, we wanted to have a jazz night here at Dioko," Nitz said.

Continued on next page

To help with Dioko's jazz night Nitz found a group of musicians that were able to perform once a week. The leader of the band is Wes Smith, a 2001 alumnus of Missouri Southern and instructor of music at Messenger College.

"He (Smith) changes up his musicians," Nitz said.

"He changes the style of music by changing the instruments within the group."

Smith likes to add a "variety to the groups sound."

"Each week is a little different," Nitz said. "A lot of times he'll have saxophone, trombone and drums.

The next week he may switch out his drums with bongos, bring in a trumpet and bring in a bass player. That way it changes the sound. The band does not have any microphones and its sound is not amplified in any way.

The soft, soothing strains of the music allow people to hold conversations as well as sit in the back and study.

"It's a good soft sound," he said. "It adds a little more texture to your experience here, to have that music."

Besides Dioko there are a number of other places in Joplin that will have jazz combos or ensembles perform.

On Friday and Saturday nights Fusion will have a jazz pianist, every now and then there will be a vocalist with the piano.

Club 609 will have a jazz band on Saturdays, but it is very periodic when the bands are scheduled.

Dr. Phillip Wise, former director of jazz studies and head of the music department said he likes the idea of local restaurants having live jazz bands perform.

"I think it's a great idea," Wise said. "First of all it promotes live music. Second, it promotes indigenous music to this country.

Jazz is an American art form and should be promoted, much more than it is in this country."

Wise said the jazz nights are an outlet for local musicians to perform. A number of Southern students and alumni perform in these bands. Wise also said these jazz nights educate the listeners to other styles of music.

"There is, quite frankly, much more than country music and rock music. I think if

people are exposed to it they will appreciate it.

"Jazz nights give a lot back to the community. I think they (community members) get a chance to hear the music," Nitz said. "They get a place where they know they can come in and hear that style of music. It adds to the cultural aspect of the downtown Joplin area."

Nitz said Thursday nights are his favorite nights at Dioko and are the coffeehouse's best nights.

Dioko commissioned a local artist, Ben Bainbridge, to paint the jazz night scene. It took two Thursday nights to paint, but it is now on display at the coffeehouse.

The painting depicts everything from the band on stage to people walking or driving past the store and the patrons inside listening to the music while discussing events of the day.

Nitz said Dioko is the only place in Joplin that has a regular jazz night; where

as some of the other places will have jazz nights at irregular intervals.

"I know places that tried it in the past. They might do it for a while and then it falls away," Nitz said.

Wise said the number of places that have jazz ensembles perform impresses him.

"The number of places (with live jazz) we have in Joplin and in this area is fairly impressive to other cities this size," he said.

"There can always be more, and there has been more."

Wise said he would like to see other places hold jazz nights, but he is happy with those who do.

"While there can always be more, I think it is a very vibrant jazz community," he said. "It's a nice relaxing evening."

Dioko's jazz night begins at 8 p.m. Thursday's.

There is no cover charge to listen to the music. ☺



A local Jazz artist gets into the groove at a Thursday evening Jazz session at Dioko Coffee Co.

Getting Through Grief

Story by Kristen Smith

Former Southern student deals with death's sting

Friends and family silently fill the rows of pews in the sanctuary as they watch memories from a young woman's life roll past the large screen over the baptistery. Voices of friends in the background of her memorial video read through some favorite Bible verses she held on to during her life. There is a sadness and heartache each person holds as they ponder the tragedy that took a life of the 23-year-old woman.

Melanie Cox, Southern Elementary Education graduate, lost her life in a car accident on March 5, 2004. Though sadness fills the hearts of the observers, a celebration of her life and her new life with her savior in heaven is being held at the funeral service.

"It was hard to think about the things that she was going to miss out on here," said Nathan Arnold. "Being a wife, a mom and an aunt. But we just don't understand that heaven is much greater."

Arnold is only one of many people Melanie loved and left behind. Even with her deep love for family and friends, she and Arnold shared a remarkable love they were planning to celebrate through marriage on June 5, 2004. After almost two years of dating and an eight-month engagement, Arnold found himself faced

with a huge obstacle most 22 year-old never anticipate. Losing his fiancée three months before their wedding immediately changed his life, his plans and his goals.

"I had joy before I met her, but after I met her it changed," Arnold said. "When I was happy, even when I wasn't around her, my happiness would be in relation to her. And I was getting my degree to be able to support her, and now it's not the same."

Arnold spent his first two years of college at Southern and is now pursuing his degree in electrical engineering at the University of Missouri-Rolla.

He said going back to school and his normal life the week after Melanie's accident was extremely difficult. What used to be normal and routine for him was no longer there anymore. Dealing with the grief now became a big part of his daily life.

"People ask me 'Are you doing all right?' and I say 'Yeah.' But what time of the day do they ask me that?" Arnold said.

He finds it difficult to look at pictures of Melanie right now, but continues to remember the things he loved about her.

"In my eyes she was perfect and beautiful" he said. "She was

Continued on next page

my encourager. You try to find a person that complements you. Where I was weak, she was strong.”

“I loved the way she smiled and laughed and I always tried to do things that made her smile and laugh.

That was my purpose. I just wanted to give her what she deserved, but I don’t think anyone could give her what she deserved.”

Arnold finds comfort in talking about what he’s feeling with his friends.

He also has found comfort in the music of Christian Contemporary artist Jeremy Camp who lost his wife at a young age. Much of Camp’s music was inspired by the grief he was dealing during that time.

Although friends and family have been supportive, Arnold finds the most comfort and hope in his relationship with Jesus Christ and in reading the Bible.

“Our bodies weren’t built to handle this kind of stress,” he said. “This is why we get ulcers. If we just give these burdens up to God and say ‘God I can’t take it’ then he will strengthen you.”

He said reading scripture, especially the Psalms, have been helpful.

“They are the lamentations of people going through the same things,” he said. “They are crying out to God. It’s nice to read it and know that it has been written.”

“Without God how could somebody stand through that?” he said. “Even crawl through it? I can’t see myself being able to make it through without him.”

Arnold encourages those dealing with grief to find someone to confide in.

“It’s important to have someone that you can rely on,” he said. “You feel a bond between you about this because they know everything that you have been going through.”

Because scripture has helped him through rough times he feels it’s important to read the Bible.

He said although no one can totally understand what you are going through and feeling, God understands. He also encourages others to get their feelings out. Everyone has a different way to deal with grief.

“Some write, some make music,” he said. “Different things help different people work through grief.”

Dalennette Voigt-Catlin, a counselor of outreach in the Student

Support Center, said it’s important to understand that everyone deals with grief differently.

Despite our differences we should go with what we are feeling because it is natural to have many different emotions when dealing with the loss of a loved one.

Voigt-Catlin said the feelings people can experience vary as they might become angry, isolate themselves, cry a lot or not at all or throw themselves into work and projects.

“If you do bottle your feelings up, you are hurting yourself emotionally and functionally,” said Voigt-Catlin. “You can’t just push it under the rug.”

She said this is a wonderful time to allow new people into your life as friends and family come to support you and provide for your physical and emotional needs. Although people are going to want to help you, it’s okay to ask them for some space so that you can have some time alone.

“It’s okay to cry or to bawl and to have some thoughts that might be strange,” said Voigt-Catlin. “Some people actually get mad at the person who died and feel badly about that but it’s just part of a mix of reactions.”

Voigt-Catlin encourages students to talk with friends or a counselor while dealing with these feelings. Missouri Southern’s Student Support Center offers free counseling and in the past have held support groups for students dealing with a loss.

If the Center saw a need for this type of support group they would quickly get it organized.

“Take good care of yourself during this time,” said Voigt-Catlin.

“Make sure that you still eat and don’t neglect your sleeping.”

Getting through the known stages of grieving seems to be a general way people deal with their grief. She said those stages are denial, anger, confusion and acceptance.

“It’s a process and it can take awhile,” Voigt-Catlin said.

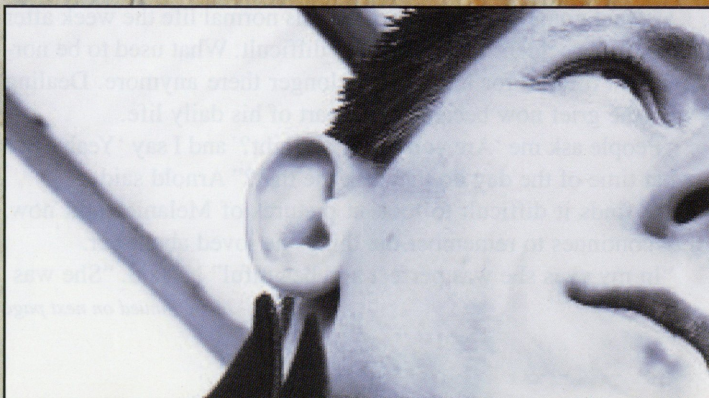
“You can hurt yourself by denying it. You want to embrace it because it is a part of life”

“People say that time heals,” Arnold said. “They say it’s just going to take time. That’s partly true. But Time allows God to heal you. When you get cut or something, time isn’t going to heal the cut. Your body heals the cut. It’s the same way with God, only he can heal you.”

Time will pass and Arnold will continue to look to God to heal his heart and for guidance in his life. ✍

Tips for dealing with grief

1. Take enough time
2. Express your feelings
3. Take care of your physical health
4. Keep busy during the days that remind you of your loss





“In my eyes, she was
perfect and beautiful.”

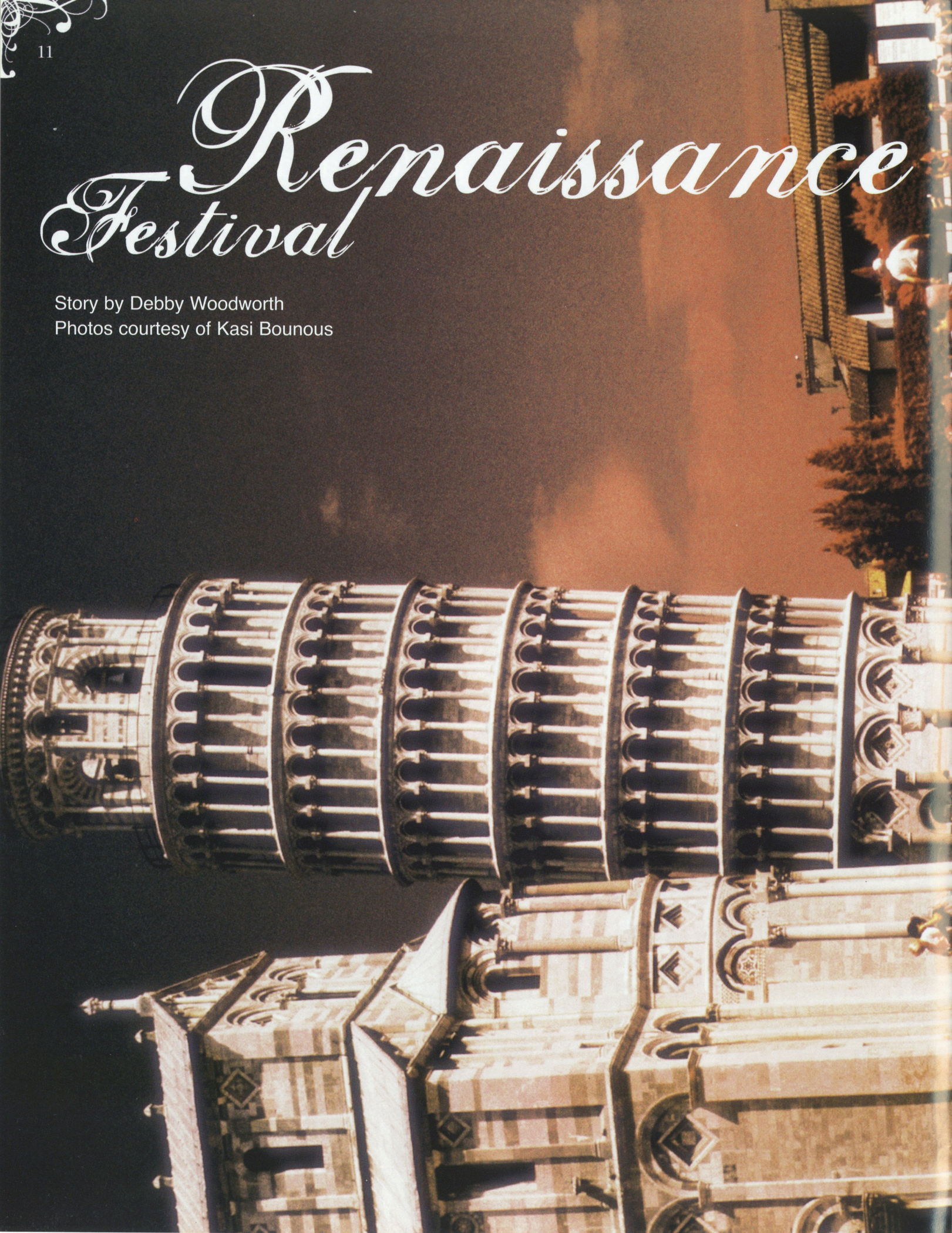


Through Grief

Renaissance Festival

Story by Debby Woodworth

Photos courtesy of Kasi Bounous



Renaissance Festival brings medieval culture to region

Visitors of the Kansas City Renaissance Festival, located at Bonner Springs, Kansas, step through the gates of time into a village called Canterbury hidden in a shady forest and fashioned after the 16th-century Renaissance period. Approximately 181,000 visitors attended the 2004 festival.

The festival begins around the first weekend in September and ends in mid-October every year. Each weekend has a specific theme, for example: Scottish Scalawags or Pirate's Paradise.

Five hundred characters wear period costumes, jewelry and hats depicting the era and visitors are encouraged to do the same. Many of the costume wearers sport tails on their behinds, as if they were their own.

There are 162 various types of shops on the 16 acres representing the 28th year of the Festival.

The smell of roasted pig over a blazing fire, outside the dozens of food shops, attracts many a hungry soul.

If pork isn't their cup of tea then guests might want to try the savory flavor of a barbequed turkey leg. Peasants and nobles alike are seen nibbling these juicy, smoked drumsticks as they meander through the 16th-century village.

Other interesting cuisine includes fried ice cream (tastes almost caramelized on the outside), Scotch eggs, bread bowls of various soups and Barbarian burgers.

Unusual rarities of the time period can be found in the various shops. Such things as hand crafted swords, shields, period clothing, walking staves and suits of armor and accessories can be purchased by the lost-in-time patrons.

For animal lovers, there is a petting zoo (which is always full of excited children), and elephant and camel rides (for both the young and old). Visitors are allowed to mingle with llamas, goats, sheep and other animals.

A variety of dogs attend the festival with their owners, which is fine if they are kept on a service leash at all times. During one of the various skits throughout Canterbury pirates might attack and fight with swords on the rooftops.

Further down the winding, shady lanes visitors come to the Dungeon Museum, which is filled with various, gruesome torture devices from the period, including a metal box that fits over the head of the victim.

A small door on the medieval box allowed a rat's entry for the sole purpose of nibbling on the victim's face.

Another device was a large wheel that a victim was strapped to only to spin around

and around while passing over hot coals.

A pirate, claiming to be Captain Kelly, peered through the bars of his hanging cage, which was half his height, near the executioner's stage.

He pleaded with visitors to petition the king for him because he claimed to be falsely accused and begged to be freed. The actors can be very convincing, which adds all the more to the medieval atmosphere present in Canterbury.

In the Royal Glades area, guests are likely to see sword fights and fencing competitions, along with Renaissance choir performances and even a human chess match.

If the day's events seem to leave guests stressed they can find a soothing solution at the House of Manual Medicine, a period massage shop.

Some may prefer a stop at one of the various pubs for a wooden tankard of dark, medieval ale.

Many bring their own handcrafted, wooden mugs carried on their wide, leather belts.

Musical entertainers around the village, complete with dulcimers, violins, flutes, harps, bagpipes and accordions, show off their cultural talents.

The medieval music in the air transports visitors into the time period.

Music shows are set on stages throughout the village, but many entertainers prefer to walk about individually playing and singing to one and all.

A large wooden ship in Yorkshire Wharf sports a performer's

Continued on next page

A Royal Guard always accompanies the Queen of England at the Renaissance Festival.





The King and Queen of England walk the streets of Canterbury talking with visitors.

stage where Pirate actors perform for guests at specific times during the day.

A shady pond beside the ship contains a dragon fountain and dark, green lily pads. It is soothing to sit beside it between shows and listen to the dribbling water spew from the dragon's mouth and as visitors glance up the hill at the clothing shop just above the pond they'll see an ever present stream of bubbles from a bubble machine.

Dancers of all sorts, gypsy, belly, fairy and peasant sing and dance to varied rhythms in the village.

Wandering the lanes are ogres, barbarians, fairies, the courts of the King and Queen, jesters and wizards of magic.

Magicians mesmerize crowds on one stage while jugglers toss knives and balls of fire over their heads on another stage.

Free living history tours are given throughout the day and last approximately 45 minutes.

Among groups that have attended the festival are the History Club and Project STAY from Missouri Southern. Some of those students enjoyed dressing in period costumes.

Kasi Bounous, history major and president of the history club, Kristan Hawkins, secondary education major and treasurer of the history club, and Stormi Johnson, his-

tory major, are all members of the Missouri Southern State University History Club who attended the festival, in a group of six students from Southern, during the Scottish Highland weekend.

"It was a great way to experience the way they lived by seeing the re-enactments, and it was a chance to experience the middle ages," Bounous said,

cious.,

"I was told you had to experience the drum leg when you went there," Johnson said.

"We spent a lot of time in the dress shops," Bounous said.

This was the first time the History Club or the members had ever been to the festival.

"Everyone should go and see it at least once," Bounous said.

Crystal Hoyt, Southern communications student, said the jousting match was probably her favorite thing to see on her first time attending the festival.

The jousting tournament takes place at the Shadowgate Downs arena. Knights wearing armor duel on horseback four times each day.

Competition intensifies as the day wears on and opponents are defeated, one by one, leaving only two opponents at day's end to duel with a battle to the "death."

Large crowds attend these matches and their cheering and booing can be heard from afar.

The Noble Cause Productions Company performs the joust.

Before transferring to Southern from Pittsburg State University, Rachel von Canon, English major, recalls attending a

"Everyone should go
and see it at least once."

"Medieval England is my main emphasis of study."

Johnson really regretted missing the joust along with Bounous and Hawkins. They got a late start in getting there as they were detained waiting for another student. They were all hopeful and determined that they would see the joust next year.

Everyone made sure to eat one of the famous turkey legs and found them deli-



Actors from Noble Cause Production Company perform a medieval joust competition.

(Photo by Debby Woodworth)

fun day at the Kansas City Renaissance Festival with a friend who designed clothes and made VonCanon's costume for her.

The designer friend was formerly home schooled in Kansas and was happy about the fellowship with other students and the opportunity to make their costumes.

Amateur archery skills can be tested and displayed by visitors to Canterbury at the various archery ranges.

Human powered Medieval rides, like the "Pirate's Plunge" are enjoyed by Renaissance riders.

With a special ticket, purchased at the information booths, guests might join the Queen's Tea Party in mid-afternoon. Children are knighted at 4:30 each day by the King and Queen in the Royal Glade.

At the end of a tiring day of walking, visitors can hire two

strong rickshaw cart drivers, to pull them to one of the parking lot. Many pleasures await guest in a visit to the festival.

Belly dancers, families clothed in kilts, Robin Hood, romance band-its, magicians, whip masters and strange beasts are among many other characters found at the festival. Perhaps half man half beast roam the streets of Canterbury hoping to open the medieval gates of time for the next visitor.

Tickets for the 2005 festival, which will run from Sept, 3 through October 16th, will be \$14.50 for adults and \$6.95 for children ages 5-12. Children under 5 are admitted free. Group discounts are about \$11 each (minimum of 10 adults) if purchased in advance.

For more more information, please contact the Renaissance Festival web site at <http://www.kcrenfest.com>.



Working At Breathing

Story by George Woodworth

Former popcorn plant employee suffers from lung disease

Duane Weber is a proud and patriotic veteran defender of the United States and the freedom bestowed upon them.

He has flown the U.S. flag of stars and stripes in the front yard of his homes long before the outbreak of flag patriotism that followed the attack on America on Sept. 11, 2001.

"I always fly the United States flag wherever I live," he said.

Duane was born in the heartland of America in Cresco, Iowa in 1942.

"It's a farming community. I liked running farm equipment like tractors," he said.

His parents were farmers of corn, oats, and beans, and also raised cattle and sheep. Duane did chores, such as feeding the cattle and plowing the field.

He enlisted into the Army for a three-year hitch from 1963 to 1966 and achieved the rank of Spec 5.

With his farming background, it's not surprising Duane's MOS Military Occupational Specialty was as a heavy equipment operator. He served a 13-month tour in Korea.

"Although it was the Vietnam era," he said.

"I went to Korea instead of Vietnam."

After his tour in Korea, Duane served on a six-month burial detail at Fort Bragg, N.C. where by forklift he unloaded

deceased Vietnam veterans from planes.

Following his discharge from the Army, Duane was also a forklift driver in an Army ammunition plant where he transported ammunition to be sent to Vietnam from 1966 to 1970.

He then maintained a warehouse supervisor position for Carnation dog and cat food for a period of twenty-six-and-a-half years until there was a reduction in the work force.

He was located at St. Joseph, Mo. for the first year, and the duration at Elwood, Kan.

Duane has had three marriages.

The first marriage was for three years during his time in the Army, the second marriage was for 31 years, and his present marriage has been for four years thus far.

His wife is Arlene Weber.

"She's great. She takes good care of me," he said.

Duane and Arlene have been attending Diamond Grove Christian Church of Joplin for four years. The church is located practically next door to where they live which makes for a convenient walk to church.

Duane has performed many oral readings at the church services, especially on holiday occasions, and Arlene has sung many songs solo as well.

Duane is always a gracious host to family and friends who visit his home. He often has offered people to stay the night.

"Motel 6 is always open," he said.

Holiday family dinners at Thanksgiving and Christmas have been celebrated in his homes several times.

One of Duane's favorite recreational things to do has been to go on trips with his travel trailer to places like Eureka Springs, Ark., and to visit his sister in Louisiana.

With his background working on farm machinery Duane became adept at mechanics.

He has enjoyed working on his own vehicles, including a dune buggy and a Bobcat loader.


Duane was employed as a forklift driver at the Glister-Mary Lee Corporation microwave popcorn plant in Jasper, Mo. in 1997 and the situation took a turn for the worse until he became disabled by July 2001 with a lung disease called CBO (Constrictive Bronchiolitis Obliterans).

Duane is among 30 former microwave popcorn plant workers who became afflicted with CBO, six of whom are awaiting lung transplants.


Allegedly, the cause of the lung disease is by inhalation of a chemical ingredient in the artificial butter flavoring called diacetyl.

He and the other former workers are involved in lawsuits against the manufacturer of the butter flavoring used at the

Continued on next page



"I work at every breath
I take everyday."



Jasper popcorn plant and have been fighting in court for over five years.

"I haven't drawn any Workman's Comp., and I am a veteran, so the veteran's hospital is treating me."

"It's not fair that the taxpayers have to take care of me when it's the chemical company's fault."

Duane has obtained several documents from online sources with news article reports concerning the popcorn plant workers contraction of the lung diseases.

Some of the websites are: usatoday.com, pulmonaryreviews.com, injuryboard.com, and microwavepopcorn.com.

He also has numerous newspaper article clippings on the former workers' lawsuits. One such article report by *The Joplin Globe* newspaper has a picture of Duane and Arlene in their home, and a quote from Duane in large print.

From a plastic tube placed below his nose Duane breathes oxygen pumped from a machine on the floor next to the living room recliner chair in which he sits. He watches the television news with hopes of a breaking story on an afflicted former

popcorn worker's lawsuit, possibly of his own case.

He can't walk very far at all without being totally out of breath. A motorized scooter gets him around to places, even to church next door. He brings a portable tank of oxygen on a dolly then goes out of the house.

Duane would like to take his travel trailer to the east coast on a planned trip, but doesn't know if he can physically do it.

"Being on oxygen, it's kind of limited," he said.

He has begun a hobby at home of putting together Erector Sets.

The first one is a Ferris wheel that actually has seats and a battery-powered motor to turn the wheel.

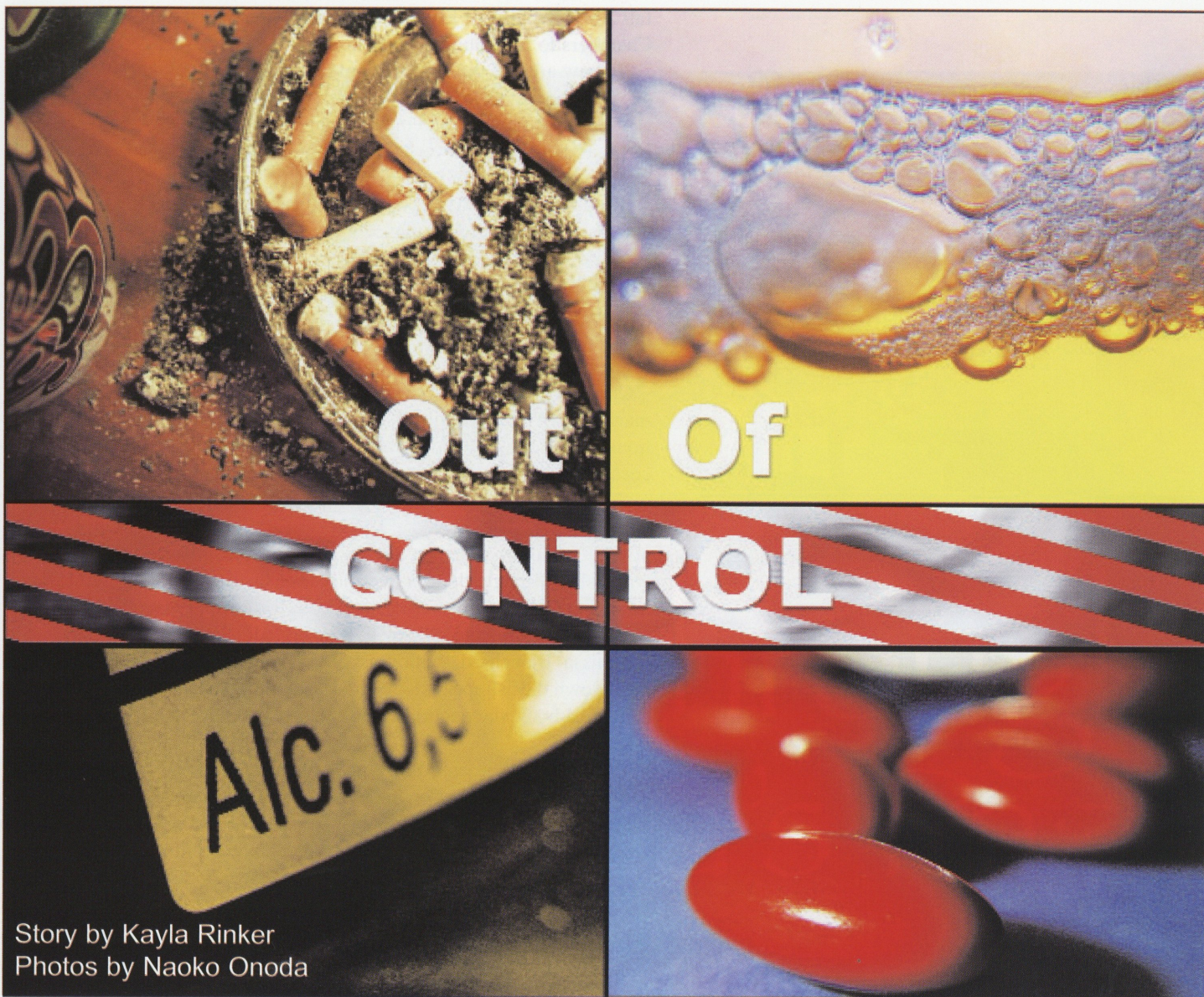
Duane Weber is a big man standing six feet and two inches, who has kept his kind and gentle natured composure in his everyday life in spite of an undoubtedly agonizing lethal and irreversible ailment.

"I work at every breath I take everyday," Duane said. "And there's no cure for this lung disease. How would any of you feel if it was your lungs after five years?"



Photo by Debby Woodworth

Duane and Arlene Weber reside in Diamond, Mo. As a U.S. veteran, Duane currently battles lung disease.



Story by Kayla Rinker
Photos by Naoko Onoda

Students find satisfaction in life after drug abuse

A chilly breeze caused the green grass in the front yard to sway and Eli Chambers' T-shirt to ripple. Trash and beer bottles from the night before littered the anonymous house's lawn.

The neighborhood was peaceful except for the birds chirping, wind chimes from a house next door and the engine of an occasional car driving by.

As the sun crept slowly out of the eastern sky, Chambers continued to lay dead asleep, face down in the middle of the yard.

The early morning dew soon dripped leisurely down the slope of his jaw line, causing Chambers to slightly stir and attempt to open his eyes.

The party that took place there only a few hours earlier had left quite a wake. The

last thing Chambers remembered was smoking pot and doing mushrooms at about 2 a.m.

Lying there soaked and swollen, he managed to slowly turn over and pull himself up, but had to quickly put his head between his legs after uncontrollable dizziness immediately overcame him.

Still hunched over and taking full deep breaths, he pulled his heavy arm upward, blinked several times to cure his blurred vision and read his watch.

It was 5:30 a.m.

This scenario is one of many Chambers experienced throughout his five years of alcohol and drug abuse. Now 21 years old and a sophomore undecided major at Missouri Southern, Chambers has given up his life of wild parties and smoked-induced

exhilarations, and discovered the purpose-driven life he has always longed for.

"Having a point to your life makes a big difference," Chambers said. "I was bored, killing time, tired and frustrated and wanted to get away, but God has given me a purpose."

Brought up as a pastor's son, Chambers started to experiment with alcohol when he was 16.

"I've never had very high self-esteem and I struggled with my self-image," he said. "I also sucked at school and it was nice to go get drunk and do stupid stuff and have a good time."

After graduating from Christian Training Center in Joplin, Chambers started classes at Missouri Southern in

Continued on next page

fall 2001. Because of his “out of control” lifestyle, it didn’t take long for Chambers to fall behind in his classes.

“I knew a lot of the wrong people from high school, and I would skip class all the time,” he said. “I would stay out all night and I would usually sleep for too long and miss my morning classes. I would wake up at about 11 a.m. and go over to a guy’s house and get stoned until about 4 p.m.”

Besides partying all the time, working and attending a few classes here and there, Chambers also played guitar in a band called Jenkin’s Dirt. He said life on the road in the band only fueled his addictions, making his wild lifestyle worse.

“I was already smoking a lot of dope,” Chambers said. “I would feel like I could do whatever I wanted to do as long as I was there at 7 p.m. for sound check.”

Chambers used a lot of different drugs since drinking and smoking marijuana in high school. Since then, he has tried and developed addictions to acid, PCP (Phencyclidine), pain medication, Nyquil, opium and cocaine.

“My government teacher said something to us one time that really stuck for me,” Chambers said. “He said addiction to anything is like if you put a pan of water on a stove and put a frog in it. If you cook the water slow enough, the frog won’t realize it’s hot and jump out. Instead, he will die when the water starts to boil. It’s a slippery slope. You take it one step at a time and eventually you are addicted to cocaine.”

Melissa Blanchard, senior psychology major at Southern, has also been down the “slippery slope” of drug addiction. During her senior year of high school, she experimented and became addicted to methamphetamine.

“I read an article on ecstasy in *Time* magazine, and I saw that it just dehydrated you, so I rationalized it as a good way to get out of my bubble,” Blanchard said.

She then talked to people at school she thought might know how to get ecstasy and they couldn’t help her, but, they did tell her how she could get meth.

“Since I already rationalized ecstasy, it was very easy for me to rationalize meth,” Blanchard said. “It was a rebellion thing. It started as a weekend thing, but it wasn’t long before I was using it after work.”

Blanchard vividly recalls the first time she tried meth. The drug is odorless, and it looks like tiny little crystal balls when it is first purchased. Though there is many different ways users take the drug, Blanchard preferred to snort it. She would chop it up with a razor and put it into a thin line. She would then snort it so that it drained down the back of her throat.

“The first time I did it, I was hacking and spitting so much that I had to drink something right afterwards,” she said. “The biggest part of the high was the act of using and not the way it makes you feel.”

Blanchard said because of her extensive meth use, her physical appearance started to change. She dropped dramatically from her normal size seven pants down to a 0-1 size. She said her parents thought she was doing a “typical teenage crash diet” and had virtually no clue about her addiction.

“We had been having a

Eli Chambers plays around on an electric guitar at Massey Music where he has worked for over three years.



lot of fights," Blanchard said.

"We went to a family counselor and he told them to just listen to me. The truth is, I am their oldest child and abusing meth, and they weren't prepared."

Blanchard finally hit rock bottom while doing meth at a friend's house one afternoon.

"My friend's father cut a line for his wife, his self, his son and then for me," she said. "It was too awkward. That scenario is what finally led to my train of thought that I couldn't do this anymore, and I didn't want my life to be like this."

Soon after that, Blanchard told her parents about her problem.

In March of her senior year, she traveled to California to a Christian drug rehabilitation center called Teen Challenge. Because of its 12-month program, Blanchard has been clean of methamphetamine for more than three-and-a-half years.

Chambers said he turned his life around after he found someone to live for besides himself. After meeting and falling in love with his now fiancée, Beth, Chambers decided there is more to life than temporary highs.

"I promised her I wouldn't do anything anymore, and it's not a burden, it's a joy," Chambers said. It's a joy because I know I'm doing something for her, and it's something I can do."

Chambers said his fiancée, with the help of God, has saved his life.

"There is no doubt in my mind that God has sent her to me," he said. "She's so cool. I've screwed up and she takes me as I am and loves me anyway and makes me a better person. I now know what I'm supposed to do. God is revealing his will for me to buy a house in Joplin, be a good husband, go back to school next year and possibly do mission work somewhere."

When looking back on what her life could have been like had she not sought help, Blanchard can't help but shudder. "I would have no standards, ambition or motivation," she said. "If my behavior had continued, I would probably be in jail or dead."

Blanchard said because of her addictions, the trust between her and her loved ones is gone. She said it hurts that her parents sometimes wonder if she might start using again, however, she knows there is no way to magically undo what she did those several years ago.

"My dad used to call it a ladder of trust and that we started building it from the start," Blanchard said. "What I started to build myself was a ladder of lies, which was not the same ladder he thought I was building. It's hard falling from people's expectations."

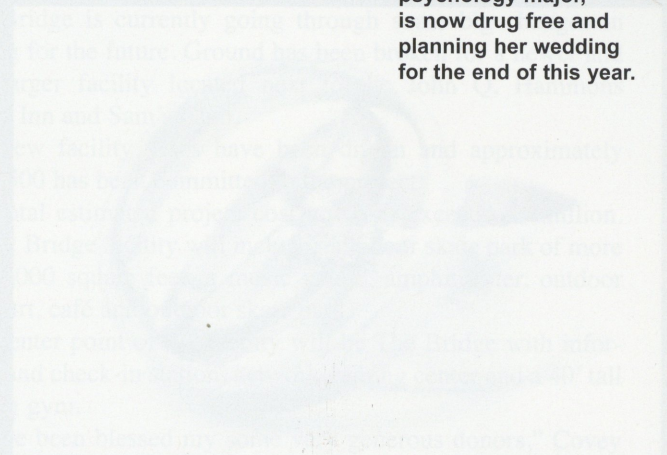
One of the main focal points of Blanchard's 12-month rehabilitation program focused on a concept she still keeps in her heart today.

"There is a passage in the Bible, 2 Corinthians 5:17, that basically says, 'Those who are Christians become new persons.' They are not the same anymore, for the old life is gone. A new life has begun," Blanchard said.

"What I did was not a good thing. I wish I had never done it, but I understand that I wouldn't be the same person I am now and I like me ... usually." ✍



Melissa Blanchard, psychology major, is now drug free and planning her wedding for the end of this year.



Rings and Things

Story by Kristen Smith

Taking the Plunge into three R's of love

Balancing school work with rest, relaxation and recreation is a challenge students have struggled with for decades. Often students tend to get a bigger dose of school work than the much needed rest and relaxation.

As college life rapidly approaches its end, many students find themselves with a big dose of the "Three R's", just not the R's that involve a greater amount of sleep.

Looking for, or finding, the person to spend the rest of your life with is often a given part of the college experience.

As that relationship advances, so comes three R's of a young man and woman's life. The Ring, the Rendezvous and the Ritual.

In order to make the experience less stressful, the experts are constantly offering advice to young

couples on each of the these three topics.

The Ring

The pressure of finding the right ring often weighs heavily on men. Bunny Newton of Newton's Jewelry has been in the jewelry business his entire life and currently owns and operates the store on Main Street in Joplin.

Newton advises men to have some idea of what their soon-to-be-fiancee likes. Possibly by picking out a couple different rings then bringing her in to pick between the choices. This way the possibilities are in a price range he can handle and she has the chance to pick the one that she wants.

Newton doesn't see a problem with the woman picking the ring as long as she used

good judgment in the price of the ring.

As far as the diamond itself, there are many different cuts and styles to choose from. Newton points out the most brilliant and overall best diamond is the round cut.

Another thing to keep in mind when shopping for a ring is which stores offer a "trade up" policy for their jewelry.

Newton's Jewelry gives its customers the option to upgrade the ring bought from the store later in life. If the woman would prefer a different ring several years down the road, she can bring the original ring into the store and whatever was paid for that ring can be put towards a different piece of jewelry.

Some experts encourage individuals with a limited budget to "buy just shy" of karat percentages in order to save money. There are many diamonds out there that are just a fraction of a percentile short of being a full karat which decreases their value. Being just a fraction short of a karat isn't something the human eye could recognize.

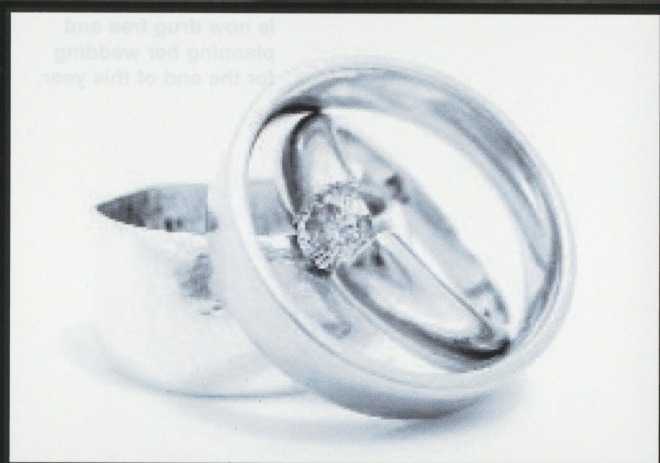
The Rendezvous

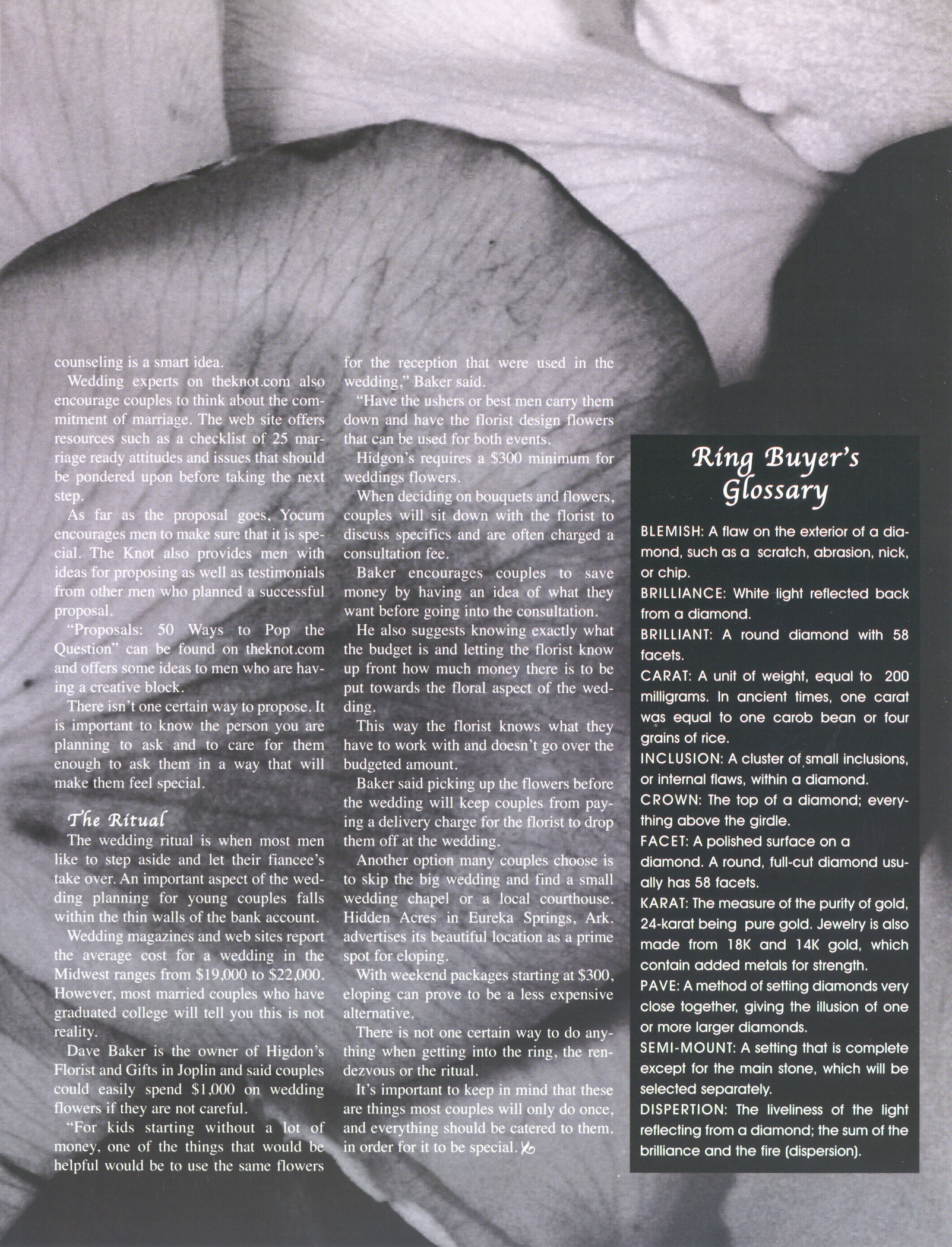
Proposing. The power of one simple question can fill even the toughest of men with a knee quivering fear. They might spend weeks sweating over the the question or planning the time and place it will occur.

Whether it's the ballpark Jumbotron or under the Eiffel Tower, they will only ask once —*Hopefully*.

Dr. Carolyn Yocum is a professor in the Communications department who teaches courses in Gender and Interpersonal Communication.

Her advice to couples is to first stop and make sure marriage is a commitment they are ready for. Yocum feels pre-martial





counseling is a smart idea.

Wedding experts on theknot.com also encourage couples to think about the commitment of marriage. The web site offers resources such as a checklist of 25 marriage ready attitudes and issues that should be pondered upon before taking the next step.

As far as the proposal goes, Yocum encourages men to make sure that it is special. The Knot also provides men with ideas for proposing as well as testimonials from other men who planned a successful proposal.

"Proposals: 50 Ways to Pop the Question" can be found on theknot.com and offers some ideas to men who are having a creative block.

There isn't one certain way to propose. It is important to know the person you are planning to ask and to care for them enough to ask them in a way that will make them feel special.

The Ritual

The wedding ritual is when most men like to step aside and let their fiancée's take over. An important aspect of the wedding planning for young couples falls within the thin walls of the bank account.

Wedding magazines and web sites report the average cost for a wedding in the Midwest ranges from \$19,000 to \$22,000. However, most married couples who have graduated college will tell you this is not reality.

Dave Baker is the owner of Higdon's Florist and Gifts in Joplin and said couples could easily spend \$1,000 on wedding flowers if they are not careful.

"For kids starting without a lot of money, one of the things that would be helpful would be to use the same flowers

for the reception that were used in the wedding," Baker said.

"Have the ushers or best men carry them down and have the florist design flowers that can be used for both events.

Higdon's requires a \$300 minimum for weddings flowers.

When deciding on bouquets and flowers, couples will sit down with the florist to discuss specifics and are often charged a consultation fee.

Baker encourages couples to save money by having an idea of what they want before going into the consultation.

He also suggests knowing exactly what the budget is and letting the florist know up front how much money there is to be put towards the floral aspect of the wedding.

This way the florist knows what they have to work with and doesn't go over the budgeted amount.

Baker said picking up the flowers before the wedding will keep couples from paying a delivery charge for the florist to drop them off at the wedding.

Another option many couples choose is to skip the big wedding and find a small wedding chapel or a local courthouse. Hidden Acres in Eureka Springs, Ark. advertises its beautiful location as a prime spot for eloping.

With weekend packages starting at \$300, eloping can prove to be a less expensive alternative.

There is not one certain way to do anything when getting into the ring, the rendezvous or the ritual.

It's important to keep in mind that these are things most couples will only do once, and everything should be catered to them. in order for it to be special. ✕

Ring Buyer's Glossary

BLEMISH: A flaw on the exterior of a diamond, such as a scratch, abrasion, nick, or chip.

BRILLIANCE: White light reflected back from a diamond.

BRILLIANT: A round diamond with 58 facets.

CARAT: A unit of weight, equal to 200 milligrams. In ancient times, one carat was equal to one carob bean or four grains of rice.

INCLUSION: A cluster of small inclusions, or internal flaws, within a diamond.

CROWN: The top of a diamond; everything above the girdle.

FACET: A polished surface on a diamond. A round, full-cut diamond usually has 58 facets.

KARAT: The measure of the purity of gold, 24-karat being pure gold. Jewelry is also made from 18K and 14K gold, which contain added metals for strength.

PAVE: A method of setting diamonds very close together, giving the illusion of one or more larger diamonds.

SEMI-MOUNT: A setting that is complete except for the main stone, which will be selected separately.

DISPERSION: The liveliness of the light reflecting from a diamond; the sum of the brilliance and the fire (dispersion).



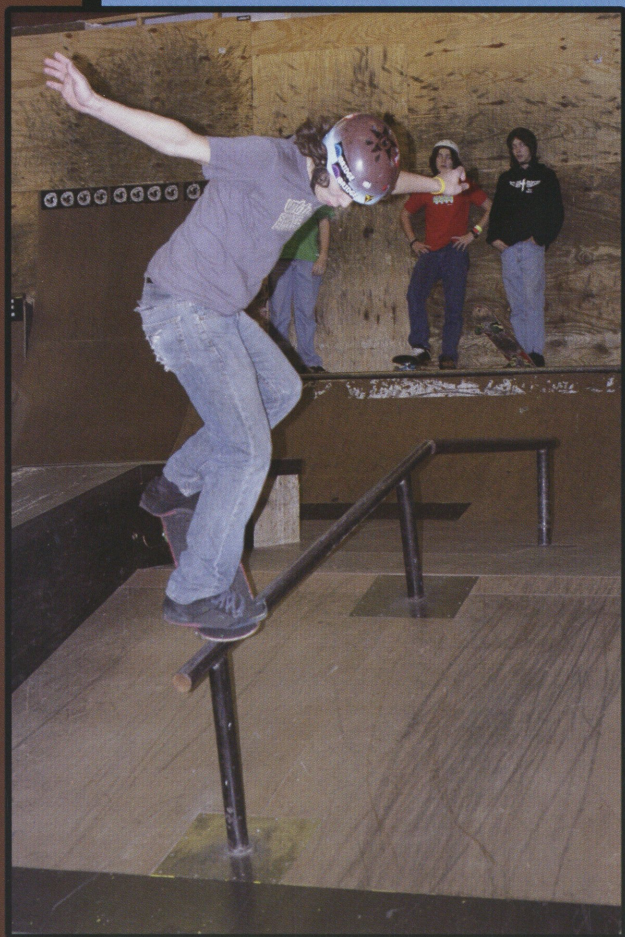
Jud Heald grinds around a bowl at a skatepark in Springfield.



Building A Bridge

Story by Kristen Smith

Photos by Scott Walters



Larger Image: Heald catches air at the Springfield skate park. Heald travels with the Untitled team. *Smaller Image:* Shawn Hale grinds down a rail at The Bridge.

Positive mentors open doors to teens at local skate venue

The roar of skateboard wheels and bike tires echo in the large skate room. Middle and high school-age students dressed in T-shirts and helmets fill the ramps and bowls.

Others find their friends becoming their enemies as they take each other out playing *Halo 2* in the video game room. Whether it's the snack bar to the skate shop, students are crawling in every corner of the popular facility known as The Bridge.

The Bridge, located at 3411 North Range Line Road in Joplin, was born from a vision on Sept. 8, 1999 by Christian Churches in the area.

What started as a place for sixth through twelfth grade students to hang out has become one of the most popular hangouts in the four states. Originally, The Bridge was designed for church and youth group teenagers to hang out.

What Dan Mitchell, executive director, noticed was the new facility was predominantly attracting "unchurched" teenagers. From there The Bridge became a ministry targeting teenagers who are not involved in church or come from a distressed home life.

The Bridge strives to "provide a safe and attractive venue for teens during the after school hours and on weekends."

With adult and college-age staff watching the facility closely, teenagers are assured a safe environment as well as a positive mentor to make a friend with. No one is allowed to enter into the facility without first checking in at the door and names of the students are entered into a computer in order to ensure their safety. Students must also check out before they leave.

"It's all about relationships," said Paul Covey, development director. "We are providing for their free time."

"They have so many hours a day of free time, and they can spend it at a place like this with Christian mentors who want to develop relationships with them."

Covey moved to Joplin in July from Austin, Texas in order to take his current position with The Bridge.

Positive mentors include college students as well as Pro-Skateboarder Jud Heald.

"Jud hangs out here a lot," Covey said. "He helps build the ramps and is one of the positive influences on the kids. He's able to use skateboarding as his testimony and witness to what Christ has done in his life."

Heald started visiting The Bridge three years ago when he came to perform a demonstration for the teenagers.

Now, he stays busy traveling the country building ramps and skating in tours as well as running his own skate company.

"For me it's a place to skate where everybody is a good friend," Heald said. "The environment is really mellow and you know nothing gnarly is going to go down while you're there."

Heald said The Bridge is most likely one of the cleanest skate parks to be found other than the multi-million dollar Vans parks.

Heald's sponsors include Untitled Skateboards, Nixon Watches, ARC Ramps, Soundkase, KofK Skate Ministries, Apostle Clothing, Ninja Bearings and Grindking Trucks.

Heald and his wife reside in Joplin and own and operate Untitled Skateboards. The purpose statement of Untitled says: "We are not religious, we are followers of Jesus Christ."

Their motto states: "Everything we have and everything we are,

holds no titles." The Untitled team sells skateboards, but they focuses its ministry toward getting the word of God to skateboarders. Untitled recently signed a six-month contract with *Thrasher* magazine and will have a full-page ad introducing the team.

Heald hopes to use the ad to get the message of what the team stands for out to kids.

Outside of its normal business, The Bridge opens its facility to local ministries to come and hang out. On Friday evenings local youth groups and youth pastors fill the bridge.

"This is just a great place to interact with kids," Covey said. "You really do start to build relationships with them."

Matt Spiel works part time at The Bridge while working towards his Bachelors of Biblical Literature at Ozark Christian College. Spiel also has a passion for music and plans to minor in music at Ozark.

After volunteering at The Bridge for four months, he was then given the opportunity to be a part of the staff.

"Working with the kids is really cool, and I enjoy that a lot," Spiel said. "The staff is a lot of my favorite part about working here. There is a spirit among the staff members, and they are really dedicated."

The Bridge is currently going through some big changes in planning for the future. Ground has been broken for a newer and much larger facility located next to the John Q. Hammons Holiday Inn and Sam's Club.

The new facility plans have been drawn and approximately \$2,544,500 has been committed to the project.

The total estimated project cost however exceeds \$4 million. The new Bridge facility will include an indoor skate park of more than 20,000 square feet, a music venue, amphitheater, outdoor hard court, café and outdoor skate park.

The center point of the facility will be The Bridge with information and check-in station, network gaming center and a 40' tall climbing gym.

"We've been blessed by some very generous donors," Covey said. "We are constantly in the process of trying to obtain grants from non-federal sources, from individual donors and charitable organizations."

In order to continue to raise support for the project, bricks are being sold around the Joplin area that will be placed on display at the new facility.

The bricks will display the names of the persons who made monetary donations.

The Bridge hours are Tuesday through Saturday from 3:00 p.m. – 9:30 p.m. Once the new facility opens, the staff is looking to have longer hours.

Those interested in donating money or buying bricks to help build the new facility can do so at Arvest Bank, U.S. Bank, First State Bank, The Bridge or online at www.thebridgejoplin.com.

Covey said across the United States the number one requested facility from teenagers are skate parks.

"We provide a need for the kids," Covey said. "Skateboarding is one of the fastest growing sports in the country. We're trying to provide a place for them to come and through that develop relationships with them and hopefully talk to them about Christ." ☺

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A Stroll Through America's Past

Story by George Woodworth
Photos by Debby Woodworth

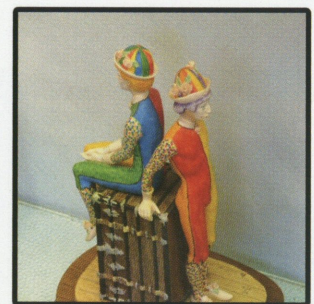


Illustration
by Debby Woodworth

Harvey and Bernice Jones leave mark on the four states



A hunting gallery of donated animals is a featured attraction at Har-Ber Village.

Nestled on the shores of Grand Lake in Grove, Okla. lies an 80-acre self-guided tour through an outdoor museum filled with antique log cabins and trinkets galore.

Har-Ber Village was built by Harvey and Bernice Jones and is one of the largest antique museums in the United States. Visitors will see thousands of American artifacts of all types, dated from as far back as the 1850s.

At the beginning of the self-guided tour at Har-Ber Village there is a verse is posted, "A sincere effort to preserve for future generations the way of life as experienced by our forefathers who carved out of wilderness this wonderful country we know and enjoy today."

The antique items are cleverly arranged in log cabin style buildings visitors can view through glass windows and doorways.

See old-time dwellings, schoolhouse, post office, dentist, saloon, bank, barber, beauty shop, horse-drawn buggies and much more. Stroll through buildings with antique collections of dolls, colorful glassware, iron cookstoves, pianos, paintings, and Native American artifacts.

Har-Ber Village began in 1968 when Harvey Jones built the "Little Church" for his bride, Bernice.

The church, constructed from bricks, has beautiful stained glass windows and a pulpit from the year of 1850.

A beautiful white marble statue of Christ with his arms outstretched stands in front of the church on the shoreline facing Grand Lake. The church is open for visitors to enter within.

Har-Ber Village has grown into one of the major tourist attractions in Oklahoma, and attracts visitors from all over the United States and many foreign countries. It received Oklahoma's Most Outstanding Tourism Attraction Award for the year 2000. Executive Director of Har-Ber Village, Jan Norman, said 390,000 visitors attend per year.

Norman said a Native American artist and painter, Alex Davis, from Joplin will travel to all eight of the Native American territories in the United States. He intends to paint a picture to represent recognition

of each territory, and donate the pictures to the Indian artifacts collection of Har-Ber Village museum.

"One of our newest exhibits is an antique collection of barbed wire. An Antique Collection of Barbed Wire Society is located in several states," Norman said.

A large number of different versions of antique barbed wire on display are amazing.

The Sweet Annie Herb Garden is a new educational addition at Har-Ber Village that visitors walk through. An Ecology Center and Nature Trail program are also a featured attraction.

"I came here 20 years ago, and wanted to see if it has changed. I'm kind of a history buff and like reminiscing the past. I really like to see the old machinery," Leonard Johnson from Joplin said.

Har-Ber Village has a variety of antique farm tools and machines on display.

People are impressed by the beautiful forested location on the shores of the huge Grand Lake of the Cherokees, and the vast collection of antiques in such a wonderful arrangement and old American setting.

"I moved from Denver four years ago. My brother and sister, and my grandsons are visiting here from Colorado. I thought it was a good opportunity for them to see something in Oklahoma," Celia McGuire from near Disney, Okla. said.

Har-Ber Village displays numerous honorable citations on certificates and plaques which were presented to Harvey or Bernice for their successful trucking business and immense charitable contributions to public institutions.

The honors are encased in glass in a building a short distance after the starting point of the self-guided tour.

The American Truck Historical Society made a special citation for Harvey Jones as a founder of the trucking industry on May 10, 1979. Jones Truck Lines, Inc. in Springdale, Ark. was the largest privately owned trucking line in the United States before it was sold in 1980.

Harvey and Bernice were instrumental in the development of facilities such as the Harvey and Bernice Jones Eye Institute in Little Rock, Ark., the Library and

Academic Resource Center at Hendrix College in Conway, Ark., the Har-Ber Medical Plaza in Springdale, Ark., and turning their trucking company buildings into the Jones Center for Families in Springdale, Ark.

The Arkansas Hospital Association presented the 1983 Distinguished Service Award to Harvey Jones. Sun Carriers, Inc. presented the 1983 Master Productivity Award to Harvey Jones for his immense contribution to the trucking industry.

Harvey received a Doctorate of Humanities Degree from the College of the Ozarks in Clarksville, Ark. in 1985.

U.S. Representative John Paul Hammerschmidt presented Harvey a U.S. flag that flew over the nation's capitol on July 30, 1988, proclaimed Harvey Jones Day. That flag is on display in Har-Ber Village. After Harvey's death in 1989, Bernice continued to donate millions of dollars toward educational facilities pursuits in Arkansas. The College of Medicine at the University of Arkansas for Medical Services presented Bernice with a Distinguished Service Award on May 14, 1993.

The Oklahoma Historical Society Board of Directors honored Bernice for lifetime achievement in the preservation and appreciation of Oklahoma History on April 28, 1993.

President Clinton awarded Bernice the Presidential Citizen Medal on Feb. 26, 1996 for her service to humanity.

After Bernice's death on Sept. 10, 2003, U.S. Representative John Boozman (AR) read an Introduction of a Resolution Honoring the Life and Contributions of Bernice Jones on the House Floor in Washington, D.C. on Oct. 15, 2003.

Har-Ber Village is open daily from Mar. 1 to Nov. 15 from 9am to 6pm. A gift shop and restaurant are on the site. Group rates are available, and there is tour bus parking. Catered meals can be arranged for groups in the Ecology Center.

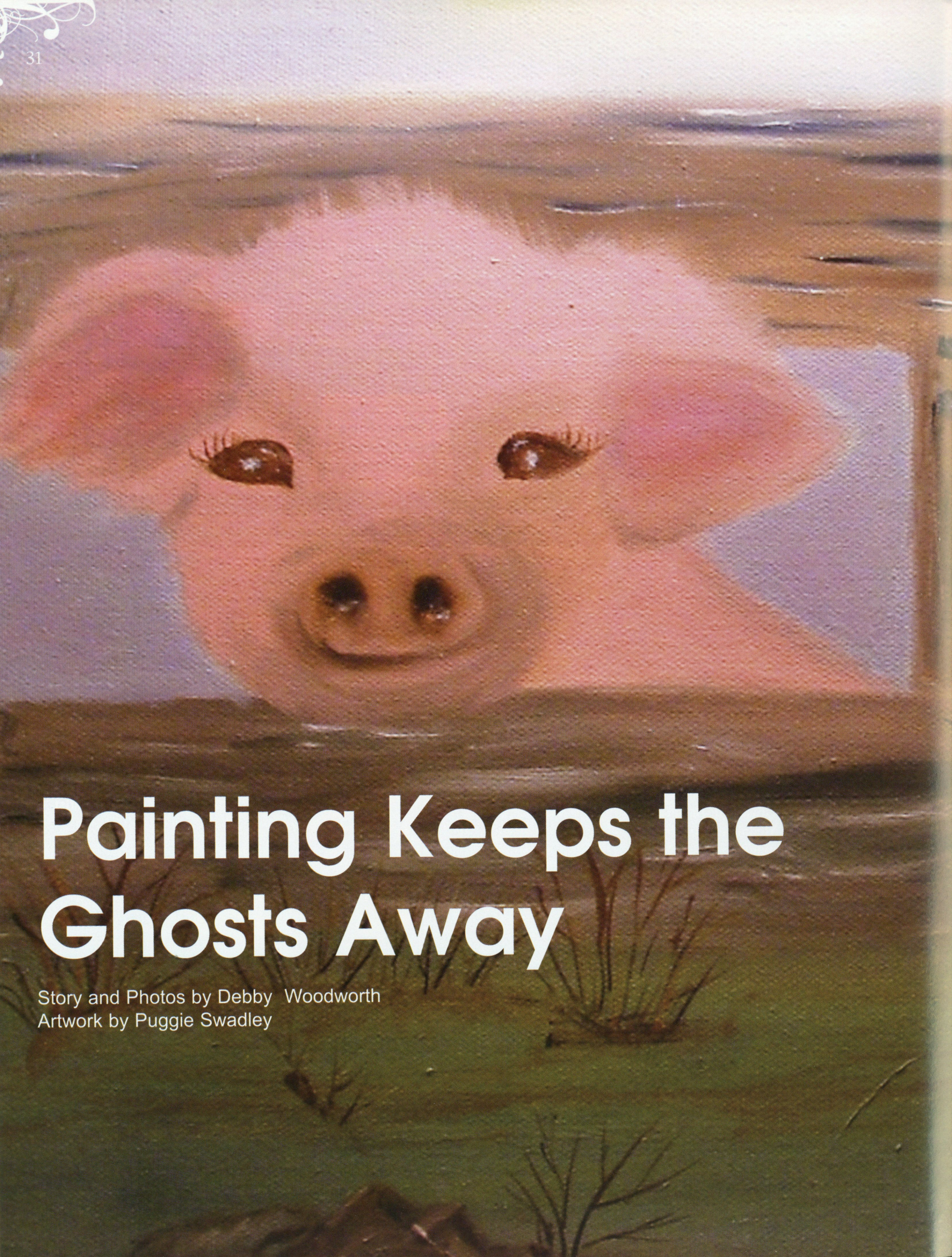
Contact Janet Mathias or Jan Norman for group arrangements.

Regular admissions are adults (15 to 62) \$3.50, seniors \$2.50 for children 14 and under free. ☺



Above: A simulated school room from the 1800's allows visitors to glimpse into the history of the education system.

Left: A stained glass portrait of Jesus hangs on display at Har-Ber Village and reminds guests to cast their cares upon Christ.



Painting Keeps the Ghosts Away

Story and Photos by Debby Woodworth
Artwork by Puggie Swadley

A painting of a pink pig with human-like eyes and a nose, looking out from a wooden structure. The pig's face is the central focus, with its large, expressive eyes and snout clearly visible. The background is a soft, painterly wash of colors, suggesting a window or a view from inside a structure.

Artist recalls how painting helps ease pain of tragedy

As the first streaks of morning shine through her window Puggie Swadley rolls onto her side in bed and thinks about the ghosts in her life, or what she calls the people who have died, for one reason or another. The smell of bacon permeates the crisp, morning air and lingers under her nose.

A fisherman must be up early.

She sits up, gently, so as not to awaken her sleeping husband and reaches to click on a small light. She glances at her indicator toe, the one that turns dark if she's eaten too much sugar lately.

It looks good today.

Puggie slips into her clothing and loose, tennis shoes and heads for the door to let Dundie, her Australian Shepherd, out to visit his favorite tree.

She crunches through the newly fallen leaves, on her way from her RV to the bathhouse, at Eagle's Nest Campground, near Noel, Mo. Dundie chases around her as she walks. Puggie's summertime job is to clean up the bathhouse after the campers do their worst. She is always one of the first people in the camp to arise from her dreams by the Elk River's ginger blue current.



The pale-skinned woman in her mid-seventies is short in stature and always has a smile. She moves through the leaves in a positive and determined manner. Squirrel's scamper and run for the woods as she passes by their nut burials. The serenity in her surroundings touches her and she thinks about painting it someday.

You would never guess by her movements that she was once afflicted by a muscular disease. As an infant, she was frail and damaged by the sun.

"My doctor thought I had rheumatic fever when I was a one year old," said Puggie, "and he told my parents to move me to where I could get more sunshine and

fresh air. They misunderstood and left me on a pallet, in the sun, beside them all day, while they worked in the hot, Arkansas fields. I was overexposed then."

Puggie cannot be in the direct sun now, for more than five minutes without consequences. She has successfully battled cancer twice in her lifetime.

She believes that what she had as a child was not rheumatic fever at all, and said, "It was very similar to today's muscular dystrophy."

She spent about six months of the year in a wheelchair. At eighteen, the affliction mysteriously began to waiver.

Today, at the Eagle's Nest bathhouse she

cleans toilets and shower stalls, wipes mirrors, washes shower curtains and hoses down the floors and walls, followed by carrying out the trash. She tends to the bathrooms every two hours on weekends.

Commonly, campers wait outside their respective sides of the bathhouse for Puggie to finish cleaning so they can run in and use the toilet or take a long, warm shower after a canoe ride on the river.

While waiting, many of them come to know Puggie, her husband Russell and Dundie, their camp-wide famous dog. The soft-furred Australian Shepherd always has a lick for his friends and wags his tail incessantly.

Children who get to know the gentle Dundie beg, "Please, may we take him for a walk?"

Russell Swadley helps his wife, Puggie clean the bath houses often, but he is generally kept busy driving the vans which haul campers to their canoeing destinations.

Puggie speaks to everyone like she's known them all her life and gets to know many of the campers personally. She has stories galore to tell.

Puggie has some interesting stories to tell about herself, too.

For instance, when she was four years old she witnessed a double murder in Laredo, Ark. Her mother and father were working in their field one day and across the road another man was cutting corn in his field.

Two men came up the road in a farm wagon and stopped to talk to the corn cutter. The men began an argument with him. Soon, the fight escalated and the men jumped off the wagon and ran toward the corn farmer. In self defense, the corn cutter swung at the men with his machete and cut them to death.

"Quick, get the children to the house!" Puggie's father whispered hoarsely with a look of terror in his eyes.

Puggie's mother gathered and pushed them along toward the house, but Puggie was absorbed by the thing and strained against her mother's push to see the fallen and bloody men as the corn farmer towered above them. The fresh, red blood trickled down his blade.

In court, sometime later, Puggie's parents testified in favor of the corn farmer as he pled self-defense. The corn cutter was acquitted and decided to go away for awhile. When he returned he had become a

preacher and lived on the land for the rest of his days.

"Why, I couldn't have done that. I would see ghosts everywhere, all over that property," Puggie said. "I remember it like it was yesterday."

Since Puggie's father worked as a laborer and her mother was a nurse, the family was very poor and commonly ate bean sandwiches, a spread made of cooked beans placed on homemade bread.

"I remember eating those sandwiches at school everyday and smelling Ola Dean Gamble's lunch," Puggie said. "Her family had money and she always brought homemade fried chocolate pies for dessert. Oh! They smelled so delicious. I always begged her for a bite and she would give me one. She was a nice girl."

Puggie isn't bitter about her poor childhood.

"My father taught us to always know who you are and to be confident in yourself," Puggie said. "No-one is better or worse than you are."

Later, she reinforced these beliefs while taking the Dale Carnegie Self Confidence Course.

Puggie attended the Ada State Teacher's College in Oklahoma for two years and then moved back to Belleville, Ill., where she was born. She worked, for awhile, at a bank in Belleville.

Then, in 1955, she married a man named Noble Needham and they moved to the Lake of the Ozarks area, where she shortly became the manager of the Arrowhead Lodge.

"They sent me to school to learn hotel and motel management. I also took computer courses."

College girls arrived in summer to work for Puggie at the lodge that sits very near Bagnell Dam on the Lake of the Ozarks.

"Puggie, you're just like the house mothers at college," said the mothers of the girls. "I trust leaving my daughter here with you."

"We all had a swell time," Puggie said. "I only lost two employees in 38 years. One quit and I had to fire the other one. I loved the lodge. As a matter of fact, I would have worked there for free if they hadn't paid me. But I never told them that."

Puggie proudly shows visitors at her home the giant, arrowhead-shaped plaque that she was given when she retired from the lodge after 38 years of service.

When Puggie was 41, long before the

retirement, life got a bit difficult. Her stomach began to swell and she had terrible kidney problems.

"In the middle of some tests one of my specialists told me that I was pregnant. Oh, you're kidding me," said Puggie.

She carried the news to her family and physician. Her physician argued that there was no way she could be pregnant, based on her medical past.

At the end of her nine month term Puggie gave birth to Shanna, her first and only child.

Puggie and her husband were happy beyond belief for they had given up all hope of ever being parents and yet, here was a beautiful, baby girl in their lives.

"Shanna and I had a very good relationship all the time she was growing up," said Puggie.

After graduation from high school Shanna decided to attend Drury College in Springfield, Mo. She majored in criminal psychology. In Shanna's junior year of college she called Puggie and asked her to come have breakfast with her in Springfield.

"Oh, silly mama, can't you come?" inquired Shanna. She commonly and affectionately called Puggie that.

Shanna always came home for the weekends, but she wanted Puggie to visit her that Friday.

"Looking back now, it's as if she knew something was going to happen," said Puggie.

At the time, Puggie thought nothing of it and received permission from her husband, Noble to go and visit Shanna.

They met at B. Coley's Restaurant in Springfield and had a good time talking and eating breakfast.

Shanna's longtime boyfriend, Chris, since her seventh grade in school, joined them. Puggie went home happy and told Shanna she would see her when she got home the next day.

The next morning, a cold October 19th, Puggie got a phone call from a woman who knew her. "Puggie, Shanna's had an accident. She's OK but you need to get down there!"

Puggie left in an instant with her stepson, Dan, forgetting to bring even her purse.

When Puggie and Dan arrived, policemen, paramedics and firemen surrounded Shanna's limp and bloody body lying on the ground. She had severe head injuries.

Continued on next page



A drunken man's car had hit Shanna's car as she was headed home from college.

"Please, let me see her. Can I hold her hand?" pleaded Puggie. "She needs a blanket, she'll go into shock!"

The emergency crew moved Puggie away and said, "What do you think? She's in shock now. She won't even know you're holding her hand, anyway."

Puggie shook her head and looked down at the table as she recalled the scene and said, "That was wrong, they should have let me hold her hand. It might have helped her. I know it would have been a comfort to me."

"Later, a Missouri Highway Patrolman came over and handed me Shanna's purse. It was all bloody," Puggie said. "Can you believe he would do that? He should have wiped it off or something."

Suddenly, the wind from the life-flight helicopter beat the grass to the ground and blew a cold shiver through Puggie as it carried her only child heavenward.

At the Columbia Missouri Medical Center several surgeries were performed to counter the swelling in Shanna's brain, but against all struggles the much loved daughter died the next morning, leaving Puggie and Noble grief-stricken.

"I hated God. I despised him," recalls Puggie, with a fist balled in the air. "How could he do this to me? After waiting so long to finally have a child and now he has taken her away. What sense does that make?"

Soon after Shanna's death Noble completely lost his mind. Puggie was left to care for him. She was so busy she barely had time to grieve her beloved daughter's death.

"If it hadn't been for him needing me to take care of him I don't know what I would have done. I had lost the will to live when Shanna died," Puggie said. "I just didn't care about anything anymore."

Looking back, she gives advice to others. "If you lose a loved one you should take the time to grieve properly."

"Noble was in a near vegetative state. I had to bath him and pull and turn him in bed until finally I broke my back. I was rushed to the hospital," Puggie said. "When I finally got to go home they had put Noble in a nursing home. I had promised him I would never do that, so I tried to make it up by spending at least 14 hours a day with him, every day. He lived for six years."

Puggie's best friend, Donna Swadley,



died with cancer, a year before Noble died. There was such a great loss. First Shanna had died then Donna and Noble.

Puggie remained bitter toward God and would talk to no-one concerning Him or religion. She closed her door to the church and its members. Everyone who knew Puggie had tried to persuade her that God loved her and would not cause her this grief.

"I still hated God so badly. I despised him," Puggie said. "Then a new neighbor moved in next door.

We talked and she knew about the accident. She was a Christian. I had told her that I was mad at God. One day she brought me a book, a physics book, not a Christian book in any way. I would never have read a Christian book. Anyway, she told me to read page 51. It said that two objects cannot occupy the same space."

My neighbor looked at me and said, "Puggie, Shanna's car and the drunk's car could not both occupy the same space. It wasn't God who killed Shanna. It was the drunk driver. It wasn't God's fault, it's just plain physics."

Puggie mauld that over in her head for awhile and came to realize that her neighbor was right. It was a matter of plain physics. One day, as Noble lay those six years in the nursing home, she was sitting in the dining room where they had brought him in a wheelchair and she heard their favorite song over the speaker system.

"Oh, listen Noble. They're playing our favorite song Only You!" Puggie said. "He didn't respond. I knew then that he could no longer communicate with me and I felt sad and alone."

Puggie eventually accepted that God wasn't to blame for Shanna's accident and returned to church. At her church, of all places, she learned the skill of oil painting in an 18 month class given by a painter named Mary Lynne. She had started the classes before Shanna died, but gave them up for awhile.

"I didn't care about anything. I just wanted to die after I lost Shanna," Puggie said.

She eventually found that painting gave her something to occupy her time as Noble slipped deeper into his own world.

"You kind of lose yourself in painting. It keeps the ghosts away," Puggie said.

Today, she has a beautiful collection of approximately 60 paintings. Puggie's favorite paintings are of flowers like irises, lavender, and English countrysides'. She proudly shows log cabins and wintry

scenes that hang above the bed in their fifth wheel RV.

Donna and Russell Swadley were best friends with Puggie and Noble Needham for 43 years. After the loss of Russell and Puggie's spouses they began going out "Dutch" for dinner and movies to combat loneliness; after all they had always been good friends. They discovered after some time that they had a deeper attraction for one another, something they had never realized before, and decided to get married in August of 2000.

Russell has three children, Joy, Jennifer and Jeff, from his previous marriage to Donna. They all love Puggie. Dan, Puggie's stepson is very fond of Russell, too. Russell was a volunteer fireman for about 15 years in the Lake of the Ozarks region and had worked Shanna's accident.

"It was very sad," said Russell.

In the living room of their RV hangs a painting.

"It's Jesus' hand, feeding the birds," Russell said. "The painting is so detailed you can see the hairs on the back of His hand. Puggie has given over 30 of her paintings away."

"I've sold only two of my paintings, one for \$75. and the other for \$200.," Puggie said. "A lady looked at one of my paintings and said, my name is on that mailbox you've painted in that scene."

Puggie told her that she was mistaken; it was Puggie's name on the mailbox. The woman told her that she would give her two hundred dollars for the painting if the mailbox had her name on it.

"You are right, your name is on it," Puggie said and she changed the name on

the mailbox and sold it to her.

In her RV bathroom hangs a cute picture she painted of two little, pink piglets. Russell and Puggie have traveled extensively, with their RV, since the marriage. Puggie collects pigs and has an assortment of them in their permanent home near the Lake of the Ozarks.

Shanna's room in their home, is still intact and much the same as when she died in 1990. Puggie calls it the "memory room." Shanna's bed and belongings all look as though she might come home at any moment. The walls are covered in her pictures at various ages.

"She was a beautiful girl," said Puggie as she pointed out her favorites.

Back in the RV, Russell keeps Puggie laughing when she needs cheering up.

"My goal for the next ten years is to keep Russ and myself happy and healthy," Puggie said. "We've traveled to see all the places I had wanted to see, like California and Florida. Also, the Carlsbad Caverns. The only thing I haven't done that I might like to do, but it's not a priority, is to maybe spend a couple of weeks in Hawaii."

After a busy day of summoning up the past, while campfire flames were high and campers sat around them roasting marshmallows and eating pistachio nuts engaged in ghost stories, Puggie and Russell turned in for the night.

Puggie pulled the covers up to her chin, but before sleep claimed her she thought about the ghosts in her life, once more. In the moonlight she saw her log cabin painting on the wall. She sighed a heavy breath, closed her eyes, and fell asleep.



Puggie Swadley sits with her husband Russell at their home at the Lake of the Ozarks.



How Sweet It Is

Story by Debby Woodworth



Health battle of sweeteners versus sugar may result in cancer

Before you grab that bottle of soda, sweep up your books, and head for class, be aware that your decision of what drink to buy could greatly affect your health.

In a March, 2004 *Journal of American Medicines Association* Pediatrics and Adolescent Medicine research article titled "Hard facts About Soft Drinks"

Joyce Giammattei, *et al*, found that "both diet and sugar-sweetened soft drinks were positively associated with obesity..."

If your choice at the soda machine is diet soda containing aspartame sweeteners, which are sold under the trade names of NutraSweet, Equal, Spoonful and other store brands, you might want to consider this:

According to a printout available at Suzanne's Natural Food Store in Joplin, aspartame does not help people to lose weight. Diet soda drinkers commonly gain weight because aspartame causes "carbohydrate cravings" and consumers usually eat more while using the product.

An original research communication from The American Journal of Clinical Nutrition by M.G. Tordoff and A.M. Alleva found that "relative to when no soda was given, drinking aspartame sweetened soda for three weeks significantly reduced calorie intake of both females and males and decreased the body weight of males, but not of females."

"Aspartame can cause neurological problems," said Mary Keels, a nutritionist for the McDonald County Health Dept. I actually know people personally who have experienced dizziness, headaches and hallucinations after using aspartame."

Michael E.J. Lean, professor, and Catherine Hankey, lecturer, at University of Glasgow Department of Human Nutrition wrote an editorial featured on bmj.com. In that they said that "Phenylalanine is a natural amino acid, and is toxic only in patients who have phenylketonuria."

Phenylalanine is 50 percent aspartame.

"I meet many individuals that believe NutraSweet is toxic," said Suzanne Charron, owner of Suzanne's Natural Foods.

"That's why I offer so many alternative products that people can use in place of NutraSweet, such as Stevia, Xylitol, date sugar and turbinado.

NutraSweet is a product of the Monsanto Company and is approved by the Food and Drug Administration."

According to Suzanne's print out, 51 percent of FDA approved drugs have serious post-approval risks and could cause adverse reactions that lead to severe or permanent disability.

Children are at a greater risk of developing seizures or neurological disorders from even the small amount of aspartame contained in just one stick of gum.

Many children's products contain aspartame including chewable vitamins, cold medicines, gelatin and soft drink beverages.

There are countless web sites and links on the Internet devoted to the safe or unsafe use of aspartame, some opposed and some supporting the product.

A "fact sheet" published by the *Journal of the American Dietetic Association*, "...aspartame's safety has been documented in more than 200 objective scientific studies."

They believe the charges against aspartame are nothing more than urban myth.

On the other hand, if your choice at the soda machine is to buy

a beverage sweetened with sugar there could also be health problems: The Tordoff and Alleva research indicated that drinking high fructose corn syrup sweetened soda increased the weight of males and females.

"Each 12 ounce can of soda pop contains approximately this amount of sugar," Keels said.

"I like to refer to it as liquid candy."

Keels said we should treat it more like a candy bar type treat and have it only occasionally, not with every meal as a beverage.

Charron said sugar contributes to many of the "itis" diseases, like arthritis, for example.

"People should drink more water and milk and avoid soda pop," Keels said.

"The phosphoric acid in soda also softens bones."

A study performed at Harvard Medical School by Grace Wyshak, Ph. D., showed in teenage girls, carbonated beverage consumption and bone fractures are associated.

Bone fractures and carbonated beverages are highly associated among physically active girls. Charron gave up drinking pop at age 16 and said when she desires something sweet she reaches for juices or fruits as they are naturally sweet.

She agrees people should drink more water and adds they should do more physical exercise when dieting.

John W. Ritenbaugh, pastor of The Church of the Great God, wrote that our bodies, like the earth, are 75 percent water and fluid needs to be maintained by a continual supply of fresh water.

He said people should divide their weight by two and that is the number of ounces of water they should be drinking each day.

The Center for Science in the Public Interest said sugar consumption has been going through the roof. It increased 28 percent from 1983 to 1999, fueling soaring obesity rates and other health problems.

Margaret Savoca, Ph.D. *et al*, reported in a study to assess association between caffeinated beverages and blood pressure in adolescents, caffeine intake may increase blood pressure and thereby increase the risk of hypertension. (From the Georgia Prevention Institute, Dept. of Pediatrics, Medical College of Georgia, Augusta.)

Keels said a good web site to find good, non-biased reports on food additives is the Nutrition Action Health Letter published by the Center for Science in the Public Interest.

They receive no funding from food manufacturers and tell consumers the real truth.

"If you are drinking soda pop instead of low-fat milk or orange juice, or eating a candy bar instead of a piece of fruit, you're missing a chance to cut your risk of osteoporosis, cancer or heart disease," said Bonnie Liebman, CSPI nutrition director.

The USDA recommends people who use sugar should try to limit themselves to around 10 teaspoons per day.

Keels recommends everyone avoid saccharin, marketed under the name Sweet and Low, because it has been proven to cause cancer in laboratory animals.

Young people, especially females, should consider their soda habits and limit the intake of both diet and sweetened caffeinated beverages.

Water intake should be increased to the recommended amount per weight of each individual. ♪

Do you have

What It Takes?

Story and Photos by Kristen Smith

Having children proves to be difficult, rewarding experience

My Fiance couldn't resist my begging and the quiet purr of the three-week-old orange kitten.

He agreed that I could keep the kitten at his house as long as we named it Stimpy.

So began our sequence of pets that would come over the next 4 months.

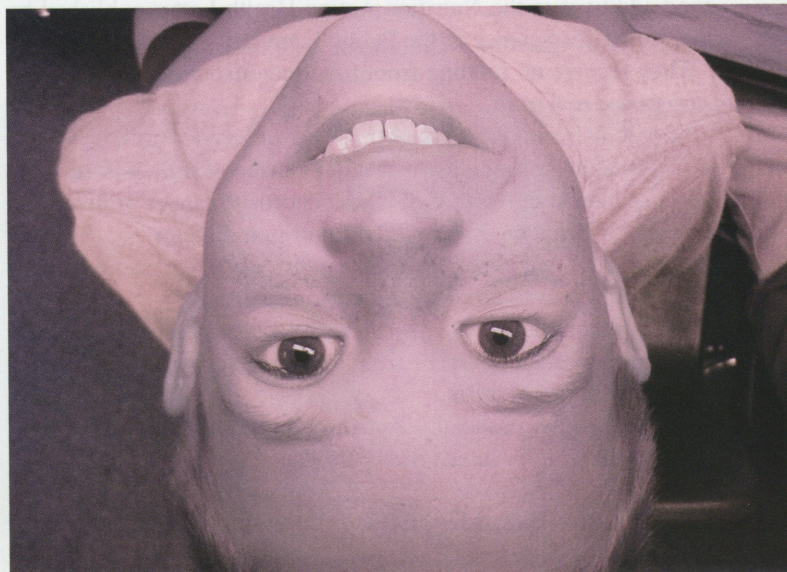
After the kitten was diagnosed with a strange problem controlling his bowels, he then became the outdoor cat who eventually ran away.

I like to believe that he found a nice home but my fiance isn't as optimistic about Stimpy.

My fiance then decided a dog would be a great birthday present, and in one brief stroll through PetsMart we had a Miniature Pinscher named Murfee.

Two months later, we lost Murfee to kidney failure and found ourselves with \$300 worth of bills. Heartbroken, we found a puppy needing a good home the following week.

Now on pet number three, we're finding the puppy a handful and our clothes and papers in shreds on the floor. References to each other have become "Mommy" and "Daddy" and we're realizing that having kids isn't a great idea for us until we can keep a pet healthy and potty-trained.



"People say that you can't plan a time to have kids," said Amber Tankersley, Missouri Southern's Child Development Center Director.

"If you waited to plan the perfect moment to have kids then you would probably never have them."

As college life progresses, many students find themselves not only looking to a career but also looking to a future filled with marriage and children.

With an increasing number of children finding themselves spending more than eight hours a day in a day care facility, young couples are encouraged to make sure they have the time and resources to spend on a child.

Tankersley said having children is making a huge decision on another person's life besides your own.

"We live now, but we always have to think about what is coming up around the bend," Tankersley said.

"Try to search out every possible different direction that you will take after you have children. Search out child care, make sure that your car is big enough, make sure that your house is big enough."

Tankersley advises couples to look ahead and explore the child care facilities in their area that take care of infants.

Questions like: What type of support groups in my area do I have to help me out? will help the couple understand who will be available to lend a hand in raising their children.

Tankersley graduated from Southern with her Elementary and Early Childhood degree in 1995. She now is married and has a 5-year old and a fifteen-month-old.

Although she loves her own children as well as working with other children, she points out that once a couple has a baby, they find themselves with less time to spend together.

Gala Moss is a senior Elementary Education Major at Missouri Southern who plans to graduate in December. She is currently working through her student teaching at a local elementary school with a first grade class.

Moss works with many students during the day who, when school is dismissed, wait around to be picked up by either the

Boys and Girls Club or the YMCA busses.

Moss said these are good programs for children, but they are often spending too much time at school or in a day-care environment.

"It's kid's raising kids," Moss said.

Tankersley said children don't have the choice to be brought into the world and couples need to take care of them the best they can, which means spending a lot of time with them.

"Children are very time consuming," Tankersley said. "Your life should become those kids. You give your life to those kids so that you can do the best you can for them."

Tankersley said that child care can be a great experience for children to be in a social aspect with other children.

"If a couple needs to send children to a child care facility, then they need to search out really good quality child care that will fulfill their children's needs because they aren't able to do that," Tankersley said.

Having children is a big decision for men as well as women.

"It definitely changes a man's life too," Tankersley said. "Hopefully the husband will play a big role by splitting the custodial and childcare responsibilities 50-50. It's give and take."

Some of the best advice can come from friends or family in similar situations. Tankersley encourages couples to talk to other people whose lives are a lot like your own.

"If you are a student talk to students," Tankersley said. "How do they manage their time? How are you doing this? How do you have this many kids and go to work? Ask your parents how they did that."

There are many resources online that allow couples to explore the world of parenting.

Parenthood quizzes can be found on web sites like www.americanbaby.com and allow couples to think through tough questions before making the decision to have children.

Although many will say parenting is one of the best experiences in life, it is a time when a husband and wife must put everything else aside to give their child the best life and experiences they possibly can. ✍



SLAVES OF



GARY



Story and Photos by Russ Roper

Descendants preserving history of confederate ancestors

Swanee Burris Baxter, born Oct. 24, 1841, joined the 15th Tennessee Infantry in June 1861 at age 19. In August of 1861, the unit was accepted into Confederate service at New Madrid, Mo. The unit reported to Polk's Corps, Brig. Gen. Pillow's Division, Walker's Brigade, on Oct. 24, 1861. The 15th Tennessee engaged in many battles throughout the war, being assigned to numerous other regiments in their history – battles such as, Shiloh, Perryville, Hoover's Gap, Chickamauga, Missionary Ridge, Dug Gap, among others. It was June 21, 1864 at Kennesaw Mountain that Baxter was captured. He was sent to Camp Morton in Indiana on June 29, 1864, and transferred to Point Lookout, Md., to be exchanged on Feb. 19, 1865.

After the war and returning home, Swanee left Tennessee in 1881 and moved to Missouri. He had 11 children and 34 grandchildren. From 1895 to 1905 he ran the Prestonia (also known as Howard's Ridge), was justice of the peace from 1905 to 1913 and ran Buster Mill several times between 1897 to 1905. Baxter died Feb. 17, 1925, and on Sept. 27, 2003, the General James McBride Camp #632 of the Sons of Confederate Veterans held a headstone dedication in honor of the accomplishments of his life and service to the Confederate States of America during the war.

Information provided by Rick Howard.

"Who am I?" "Where did I come from?" These are the types of questions being posed every day by individuals or families looking to find where their ancestors came from and what they did.

Some are lucky that some of their ancestors thought about this question as history was taking place.

While there was an organization developed after the war between the states (American Civil War) called the Grand Army of the Republic, which served the needs of Union veterans, there was no such organization for the Confederate veterans.


There were only small groups on the local and regional level, but in 1889, this changed.

The United Confederate Veteran Association was established to support the needs of Southern veterans.


Continued on next page



Family members Jeremy Lisenby, Stacey Perriman, Ester Lisenby, Bill Lisenby, Garry Lisenby, Larry Lisenby and Becky Lisenby stand next to the grave of Pvt. A.J. Lisenby.



“It is about our
ancestors, that’s what
it’s all about, the fact
that they fought
for what they believe in.”



The purpose was to care for the disabled veterans and the widows and orphans of the soldiers that had fallen. The organization also set out to preserve the service records, documents, mementos and relics, as well as organizing reunions.

In 1896, as the veterans began to age they passed the task onto their sons, this was the beginning of the Sons of Confederate Veterans.

Since their establishment the organization has been dedicated to the preservation and protection of the history of

Confederate veterans. Once the national organization was established the development of state associations known as camps began. Membership in the Sons of Confederate Veterans is open to any male descendent of any veteran who had served honorably in the Confederate military.

Those who request membership

in the organization must provide genealogical documentation confirming the relationship either direct or collateral with regard to the family lineage.

Since the requirements for membership are based directly on ancestral relation, it makes the Sons of Confederate Veterans a diverse organization made up of various races and background.

“There are 14 camps and 540 members in Missouri,” said John Christensen, commander of the Gen. J.H. McBride Camp #632. “There are over 33,000 members nationally.”

These camps, such as the Gen. J.H. McBride Camp #632 in Springfield work hard to care and to preserve local cemeteries where these Confederate veterans are buried.

They also pay tribute to them on holidays

and special occasions, and assist individuals with research questions.

They also work on the state and national issues concerning the organization as a whole.

One such special occasion is the placement of headstones on Confederate graves. On July 17, 2004, the McBride Camp, along with the Emmett MacDonald Camp form Mountain Grove, held a headstone dedication for Pvt. A. J. Lisenby, 34th Regiment, Arkansas Infantry.

His descendant, Garry Lisenby, is the Lt. Commander of the McBride Camp. When his wife did the genealogy search of his family, Lisenby was found.

They were able to come up with where he was from, where he was buried, and the information regarding his military service. Lisenby, as part of the 34th Arkansas Infantry participated in many battles from 1862 until April 23, 1865 when they laid down their arms.

Through many battles, the 34th suffered their most significant losses at Jenkins’ ferry, it was at this battle that their colonel would be wounded and they would lose many of their officers.

After this battle the majority of the companies had to be consolidated due to their losses and that would be the last combat the 34th would see.

“The only real problem was that he did not have a headstone, so we could not find his grave,” said Garry Lisenby.

The family began to dig deeper into the past when they came upon an old newspaper that A.J. Lisenby had belonged to the United Confederate Veterans.

Still doing more research, the family found the Sons of Confederate Veterans and after some inquiries were told that the mission was to preserve the memory of Confederate soldiers and insure that all Confederate soldiers had a proper burial and headstone. Garry joined a couple of years later and was able to get his great-great-grandfather the much needed headstone.

“He finally got the headstone he had never received,” Lisenby said.

“And I feel good that I contributed a little to serve a man, and people, who richly deserve to be remembered throughout history.”

The ceremony was conducted in a manner given to all veterans.

With the Confederate Battle Flag covering his resting place, and other flags of the Confederacy, along with organizational flags of the Sons of Confederate

Veterans circling around him, he received the honor those in attendance felt he deserved.

"I thought it was great, because I feel it was long overdue," said Roberta Lisenby, Garry's wife.

The dedication had more than 35 people in attendance, including five generations of the Lisenby family.

There was also a Color Guard, complete with riflemen, on hand to give the full honor of military burial to Pvt. A. J. Lisenby.

"I felt real good that there were so many people that still believe in freedom the way our ancestors did," said Larry Lisenby.

As with any type funeral, there is the moment of prayer that comes with the invocation and the benediction.

Prayers were given by Dr. William Garrett Piston, professor of military history at Southwest Missouri State University.

This gave a strong emotional connection for the friends and family at the memorial.

"I thought it was really great and I enjoyed it very much," said Bill Lisenby, Garry's father.

There were other moments during the ceremony that gave an emotional impact for the attendees.

This feeling was heightened when Rick Perry, Richard Mills and William Piston gave what is referred to as the Graveside Service for a Departed Member, or the Prescribed Ritual to Dedicate the Headstone.

The ceremony spoke of sacrifice and struggle of those who endured it and the honor and recognition that is to be bestowed on them.

"In their world 90 percent of the soldiers fought for what they believed in, and they deserve to be remembered," said Rick Perry.

The service lasted for a little more than an hour, with the family lingering around the grave site after the ceremony.

It was a special moment the family enjoyed and participated in together.

"I thought it was very good and very impressive," said Garry Lisenby.

"And I sure think the service honored my great-great-grandfather the way it was meant to."

Activities such as these are not unusual for this organization.

It was in September of 2003, when the association held the headstone dedication for Swannee Baxter, Roberta Lisenby's great-grandfather. There are also other memorials scheduled for the remainder of the year.

The association places flags during Veterans Day, Memorial Day, and several Confederate holidays.

When researching family members it can be done independently or with the assistance of a professional genealogist.

This is what John Christensen did. He obtained the services of Kimberly E. Morris, a professional genealogist from North Carolina.

"It's about freedom and truth," Christensen said, "The memory and reputation of the Confederate soldier, as well as the motives for his suffering and sacrifice are being consciously distorted by some in an attempt to alter history."

"Unless the descendants of Southern soldiers resist those efforts, a unique part of our nation's cultural heritage will cease to exist."

John got the information he had been looking for. His great-great grandfather, Samuel L. Gay, had joined the Confederate army at the age of 16 and was a member of the 52nd North Carolina Infantry, Company E.

When Samuel Gay joined, it was late in the war, 1864. He would be captured in Petersburg, Virginia, one of the final battles of the war.

Upon capture, he was sent to Point Lookout, Md., and finally after taking an oath of allegiance required by the union he was released in June of 1865.

The information gained in these searches is very similar in detail.

However, when Rick Perry obtained the story of his cousin,

Thomas W. Royster, it was a bit different. Thomas Royster was a Lieutenant from Independence.

He enlisted in Col. Upton Hayes'

Jackson County Cavalry Regiment in 1862. Lt. Royster was involved in the battles of Lone Jack, 1st Newtonia, Cane Hill and Prairie Grove, both of which were in Arkansas, Springfield and Hartville.

It was in Hartville that Royster would fall.

He and approximately 23 other men were buried in a mass grave (burial trench) in the Old Hartville Cemetery, which became part of the Steele Cemetery.

In 2000, the McBride Camp and the Wright County Historical Society erected a monument to the men of that grave.

The monument contains the names of those believed to be buried there, including Lt. Thomas Royster.

While researching their ancestors, many will find information that brings about even more questions.

When the researcher finds their relative had been captured, the information does not automatically give the location, more searching must be done.

There are numerous books, web sites, and both private and government documents that lead a researcher down an endless trail of information.

These trails are filled with dead-ends, missing portions and, at times, even misleading or mistaken reports.

Many families have maintained a record of the family's origin and deeds. These are usually pasted down in stories or written documents, letters and journals.

"I may not have met him (Swannee Baxter), but stories were passed down about him," said Rick Howard.

"He was a bear of a man, but quiet spoken and fair with people, his family came first."

Memories and stories such as these can give a person an idea of why they have some of the traits that they have or those of a family member.

While reasons for researching the past may vary slightly, there is one common thread among all of them that is heard repeated continually.

"They are family, and they fought for what they believed in," said the family members of the Gen. James H. McBride Camp #632.

"And I'm proud to be the Son of a Confederate Veteran." ❧



Above: Color guard moves out after placing flags on the grave of Pvt. A.J. Lisenby.
 Right: Major General Sterling Price Monument at Confederate Cemetery in Springfield.
 Below: Markers at Confederate Cemetery in Springfield.



Right: Color Guards prepare for the placement of flags on the grave of Garry Lisenby's great, great grandfather Pvt. A.J. Lisenby of Co.B 34th Arkansas Infantry.



Above: A Color Guard's performs a rifle salute to a fallen soldier of Confederacy.
 Left: The Confederate Memorial in Springfield honors those who died during the Cival War.



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